

INSIDE OUT!

June '90

news from inside prisons

no. 2

NO JUSTICE FOR THE POOR, THE BRAZILIAN KIDNAP CASE

On Dec. 17 1989, police surrounded a house in Sao Paulo, Brazil. It was here that Abilio Diniz was held hostage by a small group of people looking to get a hefty ransom for the return of this super rich supermarket executive and vice president of a chain of 522 stores.

A good a target as any for people seeking to receive a healthy amount of money, for what the press claimed they would use to further the cause of the underprivileged of Brazil and S. America. The very fact that one person can have so much in the face of the dire poverty that exists in Brazil was an indictment that many Brazilians could probably more than identify with. The profits of Abilio's made off the sweat and blood of the poor.

When the people surrendered to the police many of us were shocked that two of the people arrested were people that we had worked with and were friends with here in Vancouver, Dave Spencer and Christine Lamont.

Dave was very active in the political community here in Vancouver, from helping in the organizing of protests directed at corporations that were doing dirty deeds around the globe, to participating and helping to found VESAC a group raising awareness about the people fighting for freedom in El Salvador against the brutal regime there. And making known that the money for aid that both the U.S. and Canadian Governments were sending to El Salvador was being used by the regime to wipe out the popular struggle there.

Christine learned a lot about the struggles in central America while attending Simon Fraser University where she was taking a political science course. In 1987 her convictions to do all she could to help the people of El Salvador were strengthened when she travelled with a group of people to that country and came into direct contact with people fighting the regime.

The trial was a 'show trial' in that the cops and politicians wanted to show that they were in complete control and a few 'terrorists' were not going to upset the status quo. (obviously lots of promotions on the horizon). The media in Brazil helped out by portraying the arrested as harsh criminals and the heavy police presence at the trial confirmed that there was a very dangerous element at hand. The prosecution did



Lamont and Spencer: a windowless cell in the earth

everything to hide political intention, including the Brazilian police withholding evidence, and in Brazil as in most countries the police manufacture evidence when it's in their interest.

Brazils' laws give leniency to political crimes.

Of the eight charged, Christine, Dave and 3 others pleaded not guilty, saying they knew nothing of hostage taking that was happening in the basement of the house, Dave pleaded guilty to resisting arrest however. The 3 who pleaded guilty were handed out 15 year sentences and the others received lesser sentences. Dave and Chris-

tine have lawyers working on lessening their sentences but at the same time the prosecution is pushing for the maximum which is 27 Yrs. Imprisonment. The Canadian external affairs is apparently working on terms for transfer for Canadians imprisoned in Brazil, but everytime they have tried in the past Brazil has refused to sign. Christine was sentenced to eight years imprisonment, a semi-open sentence which means she would be in general population and possibly be able to work. However the judge must make a directive to the prison and so far he hasn't. She has remained in solitary confinement and is allowed out of her tiny cell about once every 10 days for a period of about 10 minutes, the police seize all her mail including that sent by her family, and she cannot communicate with Dave or the others who were convicted. Her food is of extremely poor quality.

Dave is serving a closed sentence and its possible that he could remain in solitary for the 10 years he is serving. He is also only allowed out of the cell once every 10 days, and the prison authorities are playing little games to make life less bearable.

At this point we only have an address for Dave. He would like to receive correspondence and letters of encouragement.

David Spencer : PENITENCIARIO do ESTADIO
Avenida General Ataliba Leonel 656
SAO PAULO, S.P., Brazil CEP 02088

(remember all mail is read by cops and guards, so use your sense in what you converse about)

The past couple of months have seen uprisings in a whole lot of prisons. The most numerous conflicts in U.K. prisons, but the U.S. and Canada are no exception.

Hostility to the prison system by those who are the direct recipients of its host of abuses is nothing new, but is something that will continue to increase in the near future--guaranteed. Overcrowding, shitty conditions, and more and more twisted ways for correcting the 'criminals' behavior are sure to get more severe. Each day the power structures search for new ways to strengthen their control. Prison is one of the testing grounds. Poverty is a crime in this country, and the justice system rules against the poor and lower class person while allowing those with money and a place in the system, loopholes to avoid being locked away. All the cards are stacked against less privileged people, these are the people one finds in jail. In an attempt to have their voices heard, prisoners are rising up and making their demands known.

In a society so rotten to the core, the question arises, what right does it have to judge who is criminal or not, when the whole basis of the society is based on criminal and immoral maneuverings. The voices of those locked away in the Gulags of this world will not go unheard and this paper will try to give voice to those fighting for freedom from inside prison. The Struggle Continues.....

On June 1st, 1990, a five day revolt at the Fuhlsbüttel Penitentiary in Hamburg, West Germany ended when the last 13 people were removed from the roof. As many as 250 prisoners took part in the riot and takeover.



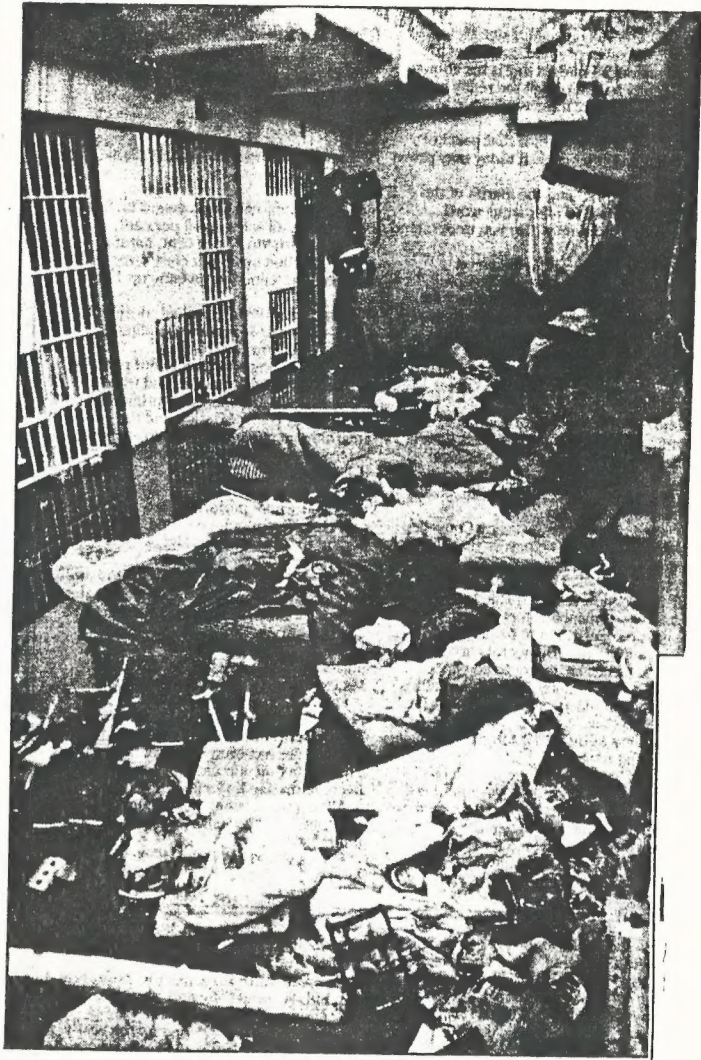
photo: last of 13 strugglees with Hamburg special police on roof

UPRISING AT OAKALLA

On Tuesday April 17 1990, about 40 or so prisoners at Oakalla Prison located in Burnaby B.C. participated in a riot and stand-off with cops and guards in the South Wing. They were demanding that a friend be returned after he was taken away by guards for 'disciplinary action'.

By the time they were thru with rioting an estimated \$50,000 worth of damage was done. The very next day a sit in took place in another wing of the prison. The media reported that the prisoners were protesting the lousy medical and dental treatment as well as the poor quality of food, and that the sit-in was ended when the authorities agreed to better the situation. It wasn't reported however that prisoners who take part in such actions are often transferred out of the prison, this way they can effectively break up solidarity between prisoners. In Oakalla prisoners are not allowed to form an 'Inmate' Committee due to Provincial 'Corrections' policies. All that is allowed is one Representative per tier and the tier reps. are not even allowed to meet with one another to discuss common grievances. We know for a fact that at least one prisoner involved in the Sit-In has been transferred, of course authorities would not mention the protests as the reason for transfer. Oakalla is an old and delapidated institution and is slated for destruction next year. An escape by a number of prisoners 2 years ago drew light to the appalling conditions that prisoners there must live in.

Once Oakalla is closed down prisoners will be sent out to new prisons in the Fraser Valley. Will these prisons present even a worse situation, prisoners being further from family and friends, as well as having to deal with the more modern day fascist architecture that 'Corrections' Canada constructs to warehouse people that society says are criminal....



PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE, FREE TO PRISONERS.

Prison News Service #23, #24
 Bulldozer #8
 The Kite
 Endless Struggle #11, #12
 No Picnic #1 - #4

Open Road #21 - #24

Ohio Seven: dare to struggle, dare to win!

W. German Hungerstrike

Writings of the Vancouver Five - Statements of resistance.

STRANGWAYS PRISON REVOLT

What apparently started out as a planned sit-in to air grievances by the prisoners of Strangeways Prison, turned into a 25 day siege, with prisoners at the controls.

A massive gutting of the ten wings of the prison as well as fires that threatened to burn the place to the ground occurred during this lengthy protest.

It all started in the prison Chapel where a Sunday morning sermon was taking place. One prisoner seized the microphone from the chaplain, and said something like, guess this is our chance. Soon there were over 1,000 prisoners roaming the ten wings of the prison.

A list of grievances would no doubt fill many pages, conditions that no one should have to put up with. Strangeways was built in 1878 to hold 890 men in 1990 1,600 men were being jailed there, half the prisoners being caged 3 to a cell which left little if any room to move, prisoners could often spend less than 11 hours a week out of their cells.

When prisoners took to the roof they used tiles chimney bricks and all they could find for lobbing at the pigs below. When the firefighters tried to stop the Gymnasium blaze more projectiles



Photo: Prisoners tearing up slates and hurling them from the chapel roof at Strangeways.



were thrown, the prisoners probably so exhilarated by the possibility of the whole prison going up in flames. Within a few days a lot of the prisoners surrendered but not before giving their best at smashing the fuck out of the ten wings of the prison. Throughout the siege the protesters would hold up new banners, one read 'No Peace', another referring to the media smear that many prisoner on prisoner deaths had occurred read 'No Dead'.

The guards in riot gear began to use 'psychological pressure' to try to intimidate the 40 or so remaining prisoners into a surrender. They banged on their shields with truncheons, probably looking like complete idiots, and shouted insults. They also directed strobe lights and blared loud rock music at the prisoners in an attempt to disorient them. It didn't seem to have the desired effects, noticeable when the prisoners fienged dance moves to the music. Anyone looking on must of thought Quiet Riot was on sight for the filming of a new rock video:

One prisoner was overheard chanting "We Won We Won, You Lost!" A former prisoner of Strangeways reported to press that he wished the prisoners would burn the prison to the ground. "I wouldn't keep my dog in some of those cells". It may not be burnt to the ground but inoperable for a long time to come it is. Overcrowding will continue to plague English prisons, prisoners of Strangeways have already been sent off to other overcrowded prisons.

After 25 days of Strangeways under siege, the prison protest was forced to end, when prison guards swept into jail in the early morning and directed water cannons at the five remaining prisoners. Finally they came down on a hoist that took them into the yard below. There they waved to a cheering crowd of family and friends as they were led away. Although the press is calling the ending of the siege as a surrender, the protest can only be seen as a victory, One down many more to go!

RIOT-HIT BRITAIN



Photo: Riot Casualty. An injured cop is carried by colleagues to a nearby donut shop.

(During the month of April unrest was the order of the day in a large number of U.K. prisons. Some of the protests were in solidarity with Strangeways, others were to air specific grievances.)

Info came mostly from mainstream press, use caution when reading.....

Insurrection

by Paul Wright

On Apr/11/90, frustrations and tensions which had been building for weeks burst forth, for approximately 4 hours prisoners at Clallam Bay Corrections Center held and controlled all three pods of F Unit (the close custody unit). Since its opening about 3 months ago prisoners in F unit have been subjected to petty harassment, such as "cell inspections" where prisoners are often infracted for not having their shoes under their bunk, "dirty" sinks, etc. At the kangaroo hearings the prisoner is invariably found "guilty" and sanctions imposed. Prison officials knew this was a source of resentment and did nothing. There are insufficient jobs at the prison yet prison officials place those who are not working on cell confinement during the day. Many prisoners have, literally put in dozens of job application, in vain. The guards in the Unit, C/O's Sukert, Turnaby, Banner and Spargur in the afternoon shifts have repeatedly harassed prisoners, trumped up infractions, locked them in their cells, revoked their privileges, etc. Petitions complaining of this, signed by nearly all the prisoners in F. unit were sent to the Warden, Neil Brown. He did nothing. Dozens of grievances were filed, plus verbal complaints to the unit sergeant can CUS. They did nothing. It was well known that the lack of jobs and the policy of locking up the "unemployed" was a sore spot, especially the practice of taking earned time from non-workers (this means that the prisoner must stay in prison longer past his sentence, even with good behavior the prisoner loses up to 5 days a month earned time as a result of this practice.) Prison officials took no steps to remedy this.

In the previous week or so several prisoners had been brutally beaten within F-unit by staff, usually during disciplinary hearings or such. On 11/Apr/90, prisoner Terry Grant was told that because he was not able to find employment he would be placed on cell confinement. Terry had put in 28 job applications, to

no avail. He told the unit sergeant he would rather go to the hole than put up with this. A few minutes later several guards came to take Terry to the hole from the rotunda area (F Unit is identical in design to Shelton IMU with 3 pods and a central control booth.) Terry dropped the first one through the door and put up a spirited resistance, landing good punches on Sgt. Fitzpatrick, the unit sergeant and other guards. Terry was forced to the floor and one guard began jamming his finger into Terry's right eye, causing it to bleed while Fitzpatrick brutally pulled on his hair. Prisoners in pod 1, recently returned from lunch became outraged at this latest in a series of beatings and abuses. Guard Banner opened the pod door while the struggle was occurring and some 10 to 15 prisoners surged forth to rescue Terry from the beating and eye gouging. In the ensuing melee the unit Sgt. and the guards who had been beating Terry were themselves beaten. In the retreat back to pod 1 prisoner Bob Lindell was captured and after fierce resistance taken to the hole.

At this point the frustration that had been building for weeks vented forth. Guard Banner ordered prisoners to cell in but wouldn't open the cell doors for anyone to enter their cells. The rebellion quickly spread to pods 2 and 3. At that point the doors were barricaded, floors wet down, makeshift weapons quickly fashioned from chairs, mops, brooms, etc. Several prisoners were able to call their families and tell them of the occurrences and asked them to call the media. Phones were cut off soon thereafter.

At about 2:45 PM the warden, Neil Brown, came to F unit to speak to the prisoners. He would not negotiate and refused requests to have outside prisoners such as ACLU or the media present as observers. Mr. Brown promised that if prisoners locked up he would listen to their grievances and complaints. He

at Clallam Bay

gave his word on this (as expected he didn't keep it). Prisoners refused to capitulate at this point. Shortly thereafter a tactical unit using stun grenades, mace and clubs stormed pod 3. Prisoner Sherman Pully was thrown down a flight of stairs, beaten with a night stick and maced. Several other prisoners were maced. Mr. Brown once more spoke to the prisoners in F unit and again asked them to capitulate threatening further violence if they refused, as no hostages were taken he felt no obligation to negotiate anything. Eventually, at about 3:30 PM the prisoners in pod 1 were the last to capitulate and cell in.

A few hours later riot squads came through and searched the prisoners' cells, after threatening to mace anyone who resisted. No one was beaten or harmed during the searches and as far as could be seen everyone's property was treated with care and respect.

At approximately 6:30 PM a bus had arrived from Shelton and approximately 30-40 prisoners were taken from F unit and taken to Shelton IMU. Among the prisoners taken were: Robert Lee, Sherman Pulley, Jason Groll, Bernard Decoutea, Shawne Karzmar, Shawn Poupart, Jim Hanson, Joe Lemere, Terry Grant, Jeff Hines, Tomeko Marcus, Scott Duey, Wayne Anderson and several others whose name I don't know (sorry guys). Needless to say, Mr. Brown didn't discuss their complaints and grievances with them before deporting them.

F unit has been on lock down since. Prisoners have been fed in their cells, and until a few minutes ago the power in the cell had been kept off. No one has been allowed to take showers or call their families. During the entire episode there was no prisoner on prisoner violence. On Apr/12/90 prison counselors began calling out the remaining prisoners, manacled, to ask why they thought the insurrection had occurred. Some cooperated with this, others did not. It appears that it will soon be business as usual

with no attempt made to provide adequate jobs, abolish the cell confinement policy and denial of earned time for the unemployed, or to restrain unit staff from their petty provocations. By not correcting these problems prison officials are responsible for setting the stage for another rebellion in a few months time, and again after that and so on. Especially when they complete their double bunking plans and overcrowd the cells and units to 40 men instead of their design capacity of 20. Prison officials will attempt to blame the prisoners for this incident and "get tough", just like they did at Attica, Santa Fe and other places. It is well known that petty policies and harassment causes more grief than good, as a behavior modification technique its working pretty good: building a spirit of resistance. ∞

UPDATE:

I am an inmate of Washington State Prison System. I was housed at Clallam Bay Correctional Center in Clallam Bay, Washington. On April 11, 1990, the officers used excessive force on an inmate which started a major disturbance in Clallam Bay's F unit (closed custody) involving 60 inmates which resulted in the need to use the Emergency response team. Thirty inmates including myself were sent to Washington Correction Center in Shelton, Washington and taken to IMU. They gave us hearings and found us guilty. We got 500 good time days taken away and six months in IMU. We are being punished for protecting our fellow prisoners!

Shawn Poupart
Shelton, Washington

SALIVA AS A WEAPON

Public health officials, medical researchers and aids educators agree that saliva is not a mode of transmission for HIV, the virus thought by many to be a cause of AIDS. But a number of recent legal cases indicate that many police officers, prison guards, lawyers, judges and juries are ignorant about saliva's role in HIV transmission. People with HIV and AIDS who bite or spit at others are increasingly being charged convicted and sentenced for attempted murder as well as other serious crimes. Many of those convicted are already prisoners, who, in addition to the discrimination they face as people with HIV infection inside prison, lack the resources and public support to fight the charges.

Take the case of Gregory Smith, a black gay PWA (person with AIDS) who was convicted of attempted murder earlier this month based on a prison guard's claim that Smith bit him. Smith was diagnosed with AIDS four years ago, when his doctor told him he could expect to live two years at the most. He was taking AZT, an anti-HIV drug, at the time he entered the Camden County Jail in April of 1989. But the jail denied him the drug, and basically ignored his health, according to Smith. By June his weight had dropped to 110 pounds (Smith, who went back on AZT when he was transferred to a state prison in Trenton, N.J. after the incident, currently weighs 176 pounds).

On the night of June 10, Smith told Gay Community News, he blacked out in his cell and injured his back when he hit the toilet while

falling. When he was discovered there, paramedics were called to take him to a nearby medical center for treatment. He was escorted by two guards, who handcuffed and shackled him and stayed with him while he was examined at the medical center.

When the doctor who examined him said he did not need to have an X-ray taken of his back, Smith said he refused to leave the hospital until he got an X-ray. At that point one of the guards threw him to the floor, cuffed his hands behind his back and took him to a nearby trauma room, where the guard proceeded to hold Smith down in kneeling position while beating him on the back and telling him "how much he hated niggers". Smith said that it was during this beating, while the guard was holding him by the cuffs behind him, that the guard received a cut between his knuckles which he later claimed was a bite wound inflicted by Smith.

Smith said that despite conflicting evidence at his trial about what happened that night, including inconsistencies in the accounts of various guards and other witnesses, the jury believed he bit the guard. Because Smith is a PWA, they also believed he tried to kill the guard.

"Unfortunately, prisoners who are beaten up by guards who lose control are often charged with assault," said Judy Greenspan of the National

Prison Project of the American Civil Liberties Union, referring to the fact that stories like Smith's are not uncommon. This injustice, however, can be compounded if the prisoner is infected with HIV. "An assault charge for somebody who is HIV-positive translates into an attempted murder charge," said Greenspan. Prisoners in this situation have a tremendous burden, she said, "because not only do they have to find a lawyer for their criminal case, but they have to come up with a defense against having AIDS." This situation is exacerbated by the fact that many public defenders and court-appointed attorneys know little about aids and HIV transmission, according to Greenspan.

Greenspan said she sees "an alarming trend in the number of cases where people have been charged and convicted with more serious crimes simply because of their HIV status and cited several recent examples:

- Curtis Weeks, a prisoner in Huntsville, Texas convicted of attempted murder in November of 1989 also for spitting on a guard;

- Shaquita Johnson, a woman imprisoned in Gatesville, Texas, charged with capital murder in February of 1989, also for spitting on a guard;

- Adam Brock, convicted of attempted murder and sentenced to 15 years for biting an Alabama prison guard (Brock's conviction was overturned on appeal);

- William Brown, acquitted of attempted homicide but convicted of aggravated assault for throwing feces (shit) at a guard in December of 1989.

Gregory Smith's statement that "if it happened to me, it can happen to anyone else who has AIDS" is supported by other cases involving people who were not prisoners at the time they were charged:

- Madeline Rodriguez, a woman with AIDS in Minnesota, convicted of second degree assault in February of this year for spitting on a cop;

- Donald Haines, a man with HIV convicted of attempted murder for biting police and spraying them with blood and saliva when they intervened in his attempted suicide. A lower court struck down Haines conviction, but in October of 1989 an Indiana appeals court reinstated that conviction;

- Gregory Scroggins, a PWA in Georgia who was found guilty of assault with intent to commit murder for biting a cop during an arrest. It took only three days in October of 1989 to charge, try, convict and sentence Scroggins, who is now serving a ten year sentence and has been denied bail (and medical treatment) pending appeal.

Scroggins is one of the few people whose case has been taken up by local AIDS activists, who are attempting to support him and publicly challenge his treatment. Judy Siff of ACT UP/Atlanta told Gay Community News that Scroggins' case was a railroad of unbelievable proportions. She said the ACT UP chapter plans a support action at Scroggins' appeal hearing, which has yet to be

scheduled. In addition, she said, the activists hoped to challenge the AIDS-phobia and ignorance about saliva transmission that allowed Scroggins to be charged and convicted in the first place.

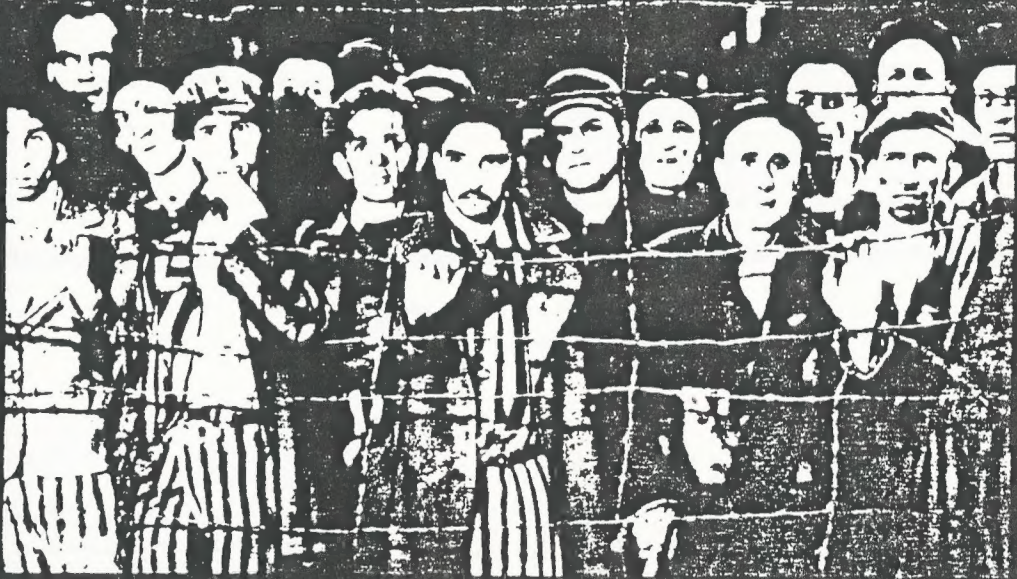
To do so, the group has called for an educational rally and picket on May 19 in Marietta, the conservative Atlanta suburb where Scroggins lived.

Smith told Gay Community News that hetoo is

"trying to get a lot of support" for his case, especially from the gay community. He urged supporters to attend his sentencing hearing on May 18, where he faces a possible 30 year jail term. A letter writing campaign has also been organised on Smith's behalf. Anyone interested can contact Judy Greenspan at the National Prison Project, 1616 P Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

reprinted from Gay Community News

▼ QUARANTINE



IS A NICE WAY TO SAY ...

CONCENTRATION CAMP.

REDKNIFE: FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM

Steve Layton (Melah Lutah , Red Knife), is a North American Indian Activist, who has been imprisoned for the last 9 years. His unswerving activism in support of Indian and other prisoners rights have earned him constant harassment from prison authorities. In 1981 after a prison riot in Sioux Falls against inhuman conditions , Red Knife and other inmates were framed up as ringleaders. The case against him was frivolous, even the guard he was accused of assaulting said he did not know who assaulted him. As well, other dirty tricks were used in the

court room including illegal use of prior convictions, denial of impeaching of a prosecution witness and denial of discovery of information. Finally an admitted racist prisoner was brought in to fabricate a story to convict Red Knife. Since then he has successfully beat a murder rap, survived an attempt on his life and spent four years in the Super Maximum Marion Penitentiary.

Red Knife Defense Network
c/o Survival network Info. Centre
302, N. 'J' St. #3, Tacoma WA. 98403 USA

Steve Layton: #36283, POBox 1059, Santa Fe
NM 87501 USA

Some Food For Thought - Prisoners are Not Inmates!

The vast majority of prisoners (especially politically 'conscious' prisoners) resent being referred to as 'inmates' because we are being detained as prisoners, which means AGAINST OUR WILL. The word inmate is mostly used by prison functionaries, lawyers(not progressive attorneys), and whoever else is employed in the so-called field of correction....

It's very important to acknowledge (how) languages become sterilized and (de-radicalized), and that soon, the warders (including some of the prisoners themselves) could be referring to the prisoners as 'residents' as if we were vacationing or something in that regard.

Penologists control the prisons, and its their goal to distort the reality of prisons and prisoners by identifying prisons as correctional facilities as opposed to prisons and penitentiaries, while identifying prisoners as inmates or residents as opposed to prisoners in their endeavors to lull the general public into thinking that that the warders operating the concentration camps

(prisons) are caring human beings and the captive audience being detained (they use the word inmates) were/are rehabilitated and not actually being punished as the supporters of the prisoners out there in the community at large are asserting

.... Prison wardens are now referred to as superintendents or administrators as opposed to wardens. Prison security guards are now referred to as correction officers as opposed to prisonguards because such titles sound more humane and less threatening. Again, by giving prisons and prisoners a less radical label they(the functionaries who operate these concentration camps and their supporters) hope people out there in the communities at large will forget about all of the inhumane conditions of prisons.....

Ojore N. Lutalo
Trenton, N.J.

FINALLY OUT

by Sekou Odinga

After being incarcerated for 29 years on charges he has consistently maintained he did not do, Dhoruba Al-Mujahud bin Wahad was finally released on March 22. Dhoruba was arrested June 5, 1971 and charged with the attempted execution of two New York City(NYC) cops who were guarding the former District Attorney of Manhattan, Frank Hogan.

Dhoruba had been singled out by the f.b.i. to be a target of the Cointelpro(Counter Intelligence Program) which had been set up by the then head of the f.b.i. Its purpose was to "disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize" progressive New African (black) leadership. Because of bin Wahad's political activity with the Black Panther Party(BPP) and his open criticism of the racist criminal justice system and the NYC police department, those in power in NYC decided he must go.

The first attempt to frame him happened in April, 1969, when 21 members of the BPP were charged with conspiracy to bomb a number of places including department stores and the Botanical Gardens in NYC. After two years and the longest, most expensive trial in NYC to that date, all defendants were found not guilty of all charges. On June 5, 1971, less than one month after the end of the Panther 21 case (4/13/71), Dhoruba was

again arrested and again the attempt to "neutralize" him had begun. This time he was tried three times for the same thing before they were finally able to get a jury to do their dirty work. To get the conviction they had to get their chief witness to change her story a number of times. It was this and other wrong doings by the Police and District Attorney's office that finally convinced a judge to release Dhoruba without bail.

Although we can view the release of Dhoruba as a victory for him and all justice loving people, we must realize the great travesty of justice that took place. For 19 years Dhoruba has been wrongfully imprisoned. And but for his refusal to accept this injustice and his lawyers' willingness to "fight city hall" he might have had to spend another 19 years in jail.

There are many other political prisoners who like Dhoruba, have been unjustly imprisoned because of their political activity. Dhoruba's release is proof that with much work and perseverance there is hope for their freedom. In one of his first statements made since his release, Dhoruba has promised to continue to struggle not only to stay free but also help win freedom for other political prisoners.

Right on Dhoruba! Welcome back into the community you surely have been misled.

source : Prison News Service

Qualities of a prisoner ally

There are many ways of 'helping' prisoners. One is to impose what you think is 'best' for them. This is the typical approach of well-meaning 'experts' and professionals' who are members of the criminal (in)justice bureaucracies.

Another way of 'helping' prisoners is through charity. We use charity in prison to provide relief of suffering and to express compassion. But there are problems with charity. Charity creates dependency. It communicates pity rather than shared outrage and can romanticize the prisoner. Charity sometimes relieves the suffering of prisoners but it does not alter the basic conditions responsible for the suffering.

A third way of helping prisoners is to become their ally. These are some of the qualities of a prison ally as compared to those of the 'charitable' person:

- the charitable person does not think of altering the prisoner's persistent need for help. The prisoner must always depend on the good will of the charitable.

- the prison ally helps the oppressed prisoner become empowered to change his/her situation.

- the charitable person often acts out of guilt and pities the prisoner who is seen as a 'poor soul'

- the prison ally treats the prisoner as an ally in change, sharing anger about prison oppression.

- the charitable person might think the prisoner's situation comes from some fault within the

prisoner.

- the prison ally identifies social and cultural forces that contribute to the cause of prisoner's oppression.

- the charitable person often has a plan for the prisoner, who is not regarded as a peer.

- the prison ally and the prisoner strategize together mutually; no one must be thanked.

- the charitable person expects the prisoner alone to change.

- the prison ally works with the prisoner and takes mutual risks, experiencing change also.

- the charitable person has their own view of what the prisoner must feel.

- the prison ally understands the prisoner's experiences thru the prisoner's own words.

- the charitable person has easy access to the criminal (in)justice bureaucracies.

- the prison ally often has a stormy relationship with the bureaucracies, because they are perceived as threatening to persons who hold power in the system.

Note: Obviously, we are not proposing that the ally and charitable person are always so very opposite or that people ever actually fulfill either role in exactly the manner presented here. Rather, our purpose is simply to contrast the basic qualities of these two relationships. Learning how to become an ally is an abolitionists task.

Reprinted from reality now #8

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Jack L. Glass Jr. 76091-1-A-21
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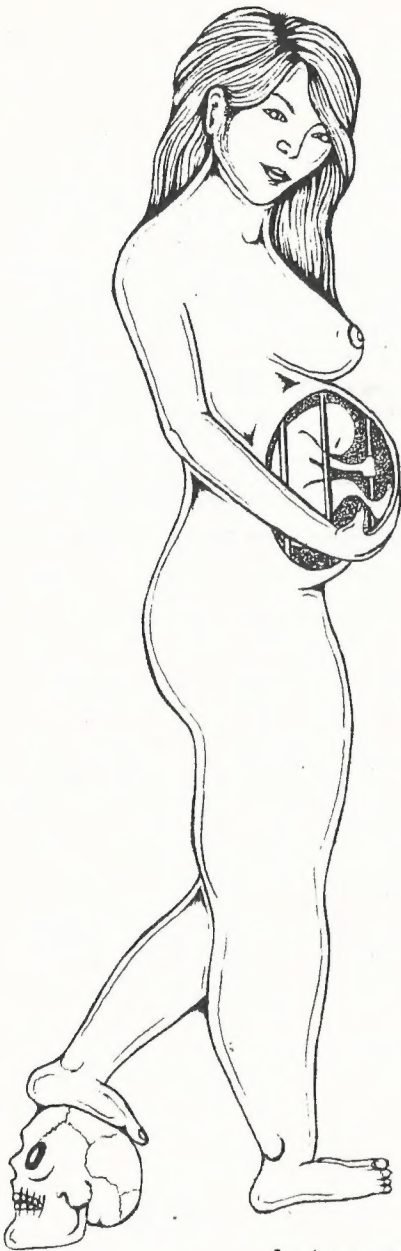
Andy Helps 0-31938
4B4R-36
Corcoran, CA.
93212 8310
P.O.Box 3481 USA

Kevin B. Dickinson
10,000 S. Wilmot 47598
Arizona State Prison
Tucson Arizona
85777 U.S.A.

it's been very quiet
the walls do not sway
peacefull

almost
pleasant
there must be an
upcoming storm

ever since
when
barbed wire
trapped
enclosed
embraced
severe hatred
manifested



Andy Helps D-31938
Corcoran, CA

